



Secretary's Harassment, Hazing, and Bullying Prevention Advisory Council
Agency of Education – The Cavern Conference Room
1311 U. S. Route 302 – Berlin, Barre, VT 05641
March 13, 2013

MINUTES

PRESENT:

Council Members: Tracey Tsugawa, Kim Brittenham, Saben Littlefield, Kathy Johnson, Charles Johnson, Ken Page, Henri Sparks

AOE: Mike Bailey, Sigrid Olsen, Maureen Gaidys

Via LNV: Griffin Thomas, Curtiss Reed

Others: Sue Gee, Executive Director of VAMLE; Joshua O’Gorman, Education Reporter Rutland Herald/Times Argus; Beth Gutmin, Community Volunteer

AGENDA:

Chair Tsugawa shared that the agenda was simple for the day (check-in on work group progress and work group meeting time) and noted that we were missing everyone except Curtiss Reed from the data collection group.

Guests introduced themselves.

STUDENT LEADERSHIP UPDATE:

Thomas gave the update for this group. During an hour-long conference call this group discussed their plan for a Hazing, Harassment and Bullying conference for high school students. It would be a one-day or weekend event, hosted at a local college. There would be a variety of presenters from different organizations addressing different kinds of bullying and how to combat it. This workgroup also talked about having students who participate in this conference travel to other schools either in or out of their own district to share what they learned with elementary and middle school students.

Brittenham commented that the group identified that there is a need to know what schools are doing and what they would like to see in regards to student leadership so we could base workshops on these needs and tailor training accordingly.

DATA COLLECTION UPDATE:

Per Reed, there is no update at this time. Tsugawa will check in with Moore to get an update.

TRAINING UPDATE:

Page reported that there have been some productive meetings that have resulted in some practical ideas. They discussed recommendations for teacher preparation programs and have been in contact with Ellen Baker, UVM, who will meet with the group to discuss possible changes/recommendations. The group also discussed the importance of communicating with bus companies, specifically on ways to report HH&B. The concept of "Training of Trainers" was discussed in hopes to identify at least 2 people per supervisory union who are trained on HH&B and can share this with their district. Tsugawa shared that Sarah Cloud, ROPA Coordinator for the State of Vermont, joined the last meeting and provided information on the revision process that is currently underway and reported that this is an opportune time to give them recommendations. ROPA stands for Results Oriented Program Approval and approves teacher preparation programs at colleges and universities in Vermont.

WORK GROUP – WORKING SESSIONS:

Chair Tsugawa advised the Advisory Council to split into their respective workgroups. The assignment was to reflect on their 6 ½ months of working together and to begin to identify concrete recommendations and articulate some clear next steps for the next three-six month period.

Chair Tsugawa brought the two workgroups back together and gave them the opportunity to share their discussions.

Vilaseca shared that he received an email from Patrick McManamon, Transportation Program Specialist for DMV, and one of his primary duties is to focus on School Bus related issues. Vilaseca will meet with him and if appropriate, invite him to the April/May meeting.

Student Leadership Work Group

The group discussed the idea of a 1 or 2 day conference, similar to Thomas' experience with HOBE. They would like to offer comparable opportunities to more students and give these students the opportunity to interact with students from other schools. The conference would offer workshops on techniques, discussions, and skill building to affect Hazing, Harassment and Bullying in the schools.

The groups discussed how many students to involve and what day of the week would work best. Consideration was given to having it on a Saturday at a local high school and getting donations for food and transportation. They addressed VAMLE's 3-5 year plan and the idea of a spin-off conference for next year, and a parent conference the following year. A suggestion was made to piggy-back with other conferences that are already scheduled (HOBE, Outright VT, etc.). It would be helpful to hear from different high schools and middle schools about what they are doing and where they find gaps.

It was suggested that there be a single repository calendar, where all scheduled events can be identified to avoid double booking. Chair Tsugawa suggested something similar to a VE² for students, a means for them to access resources on a statewide level. Page will look into this.

Vilaseca is scheduled to meet with Chancellor Donovan and will inquire about donated space at one of the Vermont colleges. Page has used VTC and reports that President Conroy is always receptive to having students on their campus.

Thomas put considerable thought into the details of the workshops that would be offered. He could really imagine keeping it simple and giving students the skills to address bullying and become leaders. Thomas will share his ideas with the council.

Training Work Group:

In the past this work group focused on recommendations for ROPA and training for bus drivers. Today the group talked about training needs for current staff. The group created a list of recommendations:

- Mandated training for all designated employees/principals in the state of VT on how to perform investigations of bullying and harassment complaints and finding a way to monitor schools' progress in this area.
- Basic HH&B 101 training for ALL STAFF - paraprofessionals, custodians, coaches, secretaries, etc. This training would name the behavior and outline the process to follow in order to stop it.
- Parallel to that, address the adult-to-adult behaviors, as adults in the schools are role models for the students and if we can't address this we cannot expect a safe environment to be provided.
- Create a separate position in the schools/SUs so that the designated employees do not change every year and so that consistency is provided in the investigation of complaints and in the training of staff. Funding would be a major challenge with this recommendation.
- Need better data collection statewide and a system that provides consistent and reliable data. There is also a need for a statewide system that tracks information K-12 and allows for data extraction and an in-depth perspective. Vilaseca offered that the SLDS will assist with the collection of data and this data will be able to be tracked, extracted and repositied (Prek-12) statewide regardless of what system the school is using. This data will not be accessible to the state, but to the individual districts. This will be tailored to what we are reporting to the US ED. We will also be able to see patterns statewide. Sparks asked if behavioral incidents would be included; Bailey confirmed such incidences would be included.
- Train-the-Trainer program so that training for staff is on-site and in the school.

NEXT MEETING:

The next meeting will be scheduled for mid-May, after Legislative session; the invite will come via Meeting Wizard again.

Meeting adjourned at 2:55PM.